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ABSTRACT

The Arkansas Articulation Program is the process used since 1986 to supervise the coordination between secondary and postsecondary levels of vocational, technical, and technology education courses whose content has been standardized as the result of competency identification specific to each subject area. The program aims to strengthen the curriculum and to shorten the technology and vocational training process by eliminating duplication of course work. The program will achieve its purpose through the formation of partnerships between secondary and postsecondary technology educators, and the process it will use has the following phases: (1) identification of schools by regional articulation coordinators, assignment of interested administrators to a regional articulation committee, and selection of technology subject matter areas targeted for articulation; (2) classroom teacher identification of any duplication among courses between levels and development of articulation agreements between schools so that students do not re-learn material in which they are already competent; (3) review of the agreements by representatives of all schools involved; and (4) implementation of the agreements, including informing students, teachers, and counselors that the agreements, which provide for direct credit transfers, advanced placement standings, and/or credit by examination, exist. By December 1989, 19 agreements had been implemented for drafting, 42 for electronics and electricity, 8 for computers, and 13 for welding programs. (The document includes a sample agreement and an application for advanced placement.) (CML)

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Technology Education Partnerships: Arkansas Articulation

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Technology Education Partnerships: Arkansas Articulation

Educational reform in Arkansas has resulted in standardized curriculum for vocational, technical, and technology education. This standardization, based on competency identification specific to each subject matter area, resulted in the development of course content guides with basic, developmental, and extension skills. Since the content guides specify what is to be taught in each course, there was a need to coordinate courses between the secondary and post secondary level so that duplication of course content did not occur. The process, developed at the University of Arkansas to supervise this coordination is called the Arkansas Articulation Program.

Articulation in this case is defined as the systematic coordination of course and program content within and between educational institutions to facilitate the continuous efficient progress of students from grade to grade, school to school, and from school to the world of work. The purpose of the articulation project is to shorten the technology and vocational training process by eliminating duplications of course work and to strengthen the curriculum in order to provide students with advanced technical skills, occupational curriculum coordination across secondary and post secondary levels so that schools may improve and retain programs as well as better serve students, employees, and the community.

The method by which the articulation program will achieve its purpose is through the formation of partnerships between secondary and post secondary technology educators allowing for a smooth transition through educational levels. The schools involved in the partnerships include comprehensive high schools, vocational high schools, post secondary vocational technical schools, community colleges, and four year colleges and universities.

The articulation process has four phases. Phase one begins with the identification of schools to participate in articulation. Schools offering the most vocational/technology subjects are selected first. These schools are divided into regions and assigned to a local articulation coordinator. These coordinators, employed by a centrally located post secondary institution within each region of the state, contact the major administrator at each school to determine if they are interested in becoming actively involved in articulation. Those interested school administrators appoint a high ranking school official (superintendent, principal, counselor, dean of institution, supervisor of instruction, etc.) to a regional articulation advisory committee. The advisory committee meets to discuss technology areas common to each school. In order to keep the articulation process from becoming difficult to work with, the committee selects three technology subject matter areas as targets for articulation.

Phase two begins at this time. The administrators form an articulation "task force" made up of classroom instructors from each of the target technology areas selected. The task force members meet to review course content guides, competency profiles, and course syllabi to determine common areas taught at each school level. For example, the drafting technology teachers at a high school, post secondary vocational technical school, and four year university may discover that they all teach the same beginning lettering skills. When this type of duplication is identified, the task force members proceed to develop an articulation agreement so that as students move from one level of education to the next, they will not be required to re-learn or spend time covering course content in which they are already competent.

When the task force develops an agreement they select from three basic types. The first is "direct credit transfer". This is where a student merely transfers credit for a course to another institution which accepts the credit. The second, "advanced placement standings", is used when students are involved in competency based education. Students who have developed skills through a competency based program and can prove they are competent may skip a beginning level course by receiving advanced placement in the next program they move to. For example, the high school student who is competent in lettering will skip the post

secondary lettering course and start at an advanced course level.

The third and final type of agreement is the "credit by examination" method. This allows students to take an examination to receive course credit and thus avoid duplication of courses.

Once the task force members agree upon the type of agreement to formulate for the course, specific criteria are worked out. These criteria usually involve conditions and procedures which must be followed by students, instructors, and each institution when involved in one of the agreements. These conditions and procedures vary according to the type of agreement used. When the direct credit transfer method is used the only condition involved is that both institutions must be accredited. Examples of conditions and procedures used with the advanced placement standing method are:

1. Participating instructors will teach from the list of competencies (task list) based on job task requirements.

2. Recommendations for advanced placement standings should be made by the classroom instructor and school administrator.

3. Student application for advanced placement standing must be made within 12 months of completion of a course or graduation from high school.

4. Application for advanced placement must be completed prior to registration deadlines.

Examples of criteria which must be met for students to receive credit by examination are:

1. The test instrument should be designed and administered by the intaking institution.

2. Nominal fees may be charged to cover test administration.

3. Application for credit by examination must be completed prior to registration deadlines.

4. It should be the responsibility of the intaking institution to maintain the students' permanent records.

Phase three of the process begins once the articulation agreements are written by the task force. This phase involves meetings of administrators, teachers, and counselors from each school involved in each agreement. This group reviews agreements for workability, and if all is in order, they sign the agreement and put them into effect at the local school level (See appendix 1).

The final phase involves the implementation of the articulation agreement. This phase includes the process of informing counselors, teachers, and students that articulation agreements are available. At this time, agreements and procedures are explained so that students at each local school can participate in articulation. In order to participate in articulation, a student must fill out an application (see appendix 2) with the help of their teacher and counselor and send it to the appropriate instructor. If all criteria are met, the student then moves to the next level of education.

After the agreements are written, in place, and operational, the process begins all over again. New subjects and new schools are involved in the process. At

the current time the articulation program has finished its fourth year. There are four basic technology programs involved, drafting, electronics, computers, and welding. There are 82 agreements involving these 4 areas. The specific break down is as follows: 42 agreements in electronics/electricity, 19 agreements in drafting, 13 agreements in welding, and 8 agreements in the computer area.

APPENDIX I
ARTICULATION AGREEMENT

The following is a sample of an agreement which was written through the articulation process.

WELDING
ARTICULATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN
_____ HIGH SCHOOL
AND
_____ VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL
AT _____, ARKANSAS

I. ADVANCED PLACEMENT STANDING

_____ Vocational-Technical School has agreed to grant advanced placement standing to students for the following courses:

course number	course name	credit hours
WLD 1106	Introduction to Welding	6
WLD 1103	Position Welding	3

The following criteria must be met in order for the students to receive advanced placement standing:

A. Participating instructors will teach from the list of competencies (task list) based on job task requirements.

B. Recommendation for advance placement standing should be made by the classroom instructor and school administrator.

C. Student shall complete designated courses at _____ School and will meet or exceed the objectives listed in the student competency profile * in order to be recommended for advanced placement.

D. There will be no charge for advanced placement standing transfer.

E. Application for advanced placement must be completed prior to registration deadlines.

*The student competency profile is scored on the following scale:

3 - Exceeds performance objectives

2 - Meets performance objectives

1 - Does not meet performance objectives

0 - No exposure

II. Credit by Examination

Credit for the following courses may be earned at Vocational-Technical School by achieving a passing score on an examination for credit:

course number	course name	maximum credit allowed	name of exam	minimum score for credit
WLD 1106	INTRO TO WELDING	6	Instructor made	85%
WLD 1103	POSITION WELDING	3	Instructor made	85%

The following criteria must be met for students to receive credit by examination:

A. The test instrument should be designed and administered by the intaking institution.

B. Application for credit by examination must be completed prior to registration deadlines.

C. It should be the responsibility of the intaking institution to maintain the student's permanent records.

III. GENERAL PROCEDURES

A. All articulating students shall meet and maintain the prerequisites and academic standards of the intaking institution and the intended program of study.

B. Articulated credit will become a part of the student's permanent record at the intaking institution.

C. Designated representatives from each institution will attend a meeting schedules prior to the beginning of each academic year and review each course and amend, as necessary, the competencies, evaluation system, recording forms, and competency measures to establish the levels of competency.

D. Appropriate faculty and administrators from participating institutions will have orientation in the articulation process described herein.

E. As new courses are offered or existing courses revised at either level of education, articulation efforts will be explored and implemented where feasible.

F. This agreement shall continue in full force and effect unless either party notifies the other in writing of cancellation within 6 months prior to the date of cancellation.

_____
_____, Principal
_____ High School

_____
_____, Director
_____ Vo Tech School

APPENDIX II
ARTICULATION APPLICATION

ARTICULATION

Application for Advanced Placement
(credit by transfer or examination)

SOURCE INSTITUTION_____

ACCEPTING INSTITUTION_____

Student's Name_____
Last First Middle

Address_____
Number and Street City State Zip

Social Security Number_____ Date_____ Telephone No._____

High School_____ Year of Graduation_____

This certifies that the above-named student has satisfactorily met all performance standards outlined in the _____ Program and is recommended for advanced placement/credit in the following _____ course(s):

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	TRANSFER CREDIT HOURS	EXAM CREDIT HOURS
____	_____	_____	_____
____	_____	_____	_____
____	_____	_____	_____

Signatures:_____ _____
Instructor (Source Institution) Date

_____ _____
Counselor (Source Institution) Date

HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELORS

1. PLEASE SIGN AND ATTACH THIS FORM TO the Admissions Application.
2. Attach competency profile and/or transcript.
3. RETAIN A COPY OF THIS FORM.
4. Mail to Accepting Institution:

   School_____

   Street_____

   City_____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Course Title	Number	Hours
_____		
_____		
_____		

Approved:

_____
Administrator/Instructor

Program Area_____

Date_____